Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 079071
ORIGIN AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /011 R

66011
DRAFTED BY:AF/W:DALTON V KILLION
APPROVED BY:AF/W:TWMSMITH
----------010230 280808Z /21
R 280141Z MAR 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
INFO AMEMBASSY BAMAKO 8036

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 079071

FOL CONAKRY 0594 SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO MOSCOW PEKING
MAR -3, 7978 REPEATED TO YOU QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L CONAKRY 0594

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PEPR, MILI, PINT, GV, CH
SUBJECT: DINNER WITH CHINESE AMBASSADOR

1. TO CHARGE'S SURPRISE, PRC AMBASSADOR PENG HUA ACCEPTED HIS INVITATION TO DINNER ON MARCH 22; PRC DCM JEN HUNG AND INTERPRETER HSIA SHOU-AN PLUS THREE US EMBOFFS ALSO ATTENDED. THIS IS BELIEVED TO BE FIRST TIME PRC DIPLOMATS AT CONAKRY HAVE COME TO SOCIAL FUNCTION AT US HOME, ALTHOUGH AMBASSADORS HAVE EXCHANGED CALLS AND PERSONAL RELATIONS HAVE BEEN INCREASINGLY CORDIAL. PENG MADE CLEAR THAT HE IS PERMITTED TO VISIT AMERICANS BILATERALLY, BUT HE MAY NOT ATTEND US EVENTS WHERE THIRD-COUNTRY DIPLOMATS ARE PRESENT. HE PROMISED HE WOULD NEXT INVITE US AMBASSADOR AND COLLEAGUES TO PRC EMBASSY FOR CHINESE MEAL. FOLLOWING PENG COMMENTS REPORTED FOR WHAT THEY ARE WORTH:

2. PENG PLANS TO RETURN HOME ON MARCH 29 FOR TWO MONTHS'
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PAGE 02 STATE 079071

VACATION AND TO REFRESH HIMSELF ON HAPPENINGS IN CHINA AS RESULT RECENT PARTY-GOVERNMENT MEETINGS. PENG, SEEMINGLY A PRAGMATIST, SAID GANG OF FOUR HAD BEEN ROUTED WITHIN PRC RULING APPARATUS BUT GANG'S MENTALITY STILL PREVAILED IN PLACES AND WOULD TAKE TIME TO BE STAMPED OUT.

3. PENG SAID PRC FAVORED SEKOU TOURE'S HISTORIC MARCH 18

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

RECONCILIATION WITH SENEGAL'S SENGHOR AND IVORY
COAST'S HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY. PEOPLE'S DAILY HAD REPORTED
MONROVIA SUMMIT POSITIVELY BUT PRC DID NOT PLAN TO SEND
CONGRATULATORY MESSAGE. ONLY PARTIES DISAPPOINTED WITH RECON-
CILIATION WERE SOVIETS WHO, HE SAID, FEED ON TENSION AND DISCORD.
PRC EMBASSY HAD FORWARDED GOG'S APPEAL FOR DROUGHT AID TO
PEKING BUT HAD NO RESPONSE YET. HE SAID PRC HAD MUCH
FEWER CHINESE AID PERSONNEL WORKING IN INTERIOR GUINEA
NOW, EXCEPT THAT HYDRAULIC SPECIALISTS STILL WERE BUSY
AT KABAK ISLAND'S IRRIGATION WORKS. IT REMAINED TO
BE SEEN HOW WELL CHINESE AID PROJECTS WOULD FARE AFTER BEING
TURNED OVER COMPLETELY TO GUINEANS. HE ASSUMES CHINESE-
BUILT MACENTA TEA FACTORY STILL FUNCTIONS SINCE ONCE IN
A WHILE TEA TINS ARE SEEN IN MARKET.

4. PENG FELT SOVIETS HAD NOT GOT MUCH OF ANYTHING FROM
GUINEANS AS RESULT OF ADMIRAL GORSHKOV'S VISIT TO CONAKRY
IN LATE JANUARY. HE AGREED THAT IT WAS HARD TO IMAGINE
GUINEA GRANTING SOVIETS WIDER BASING RIGHTS OR MILITARY
CONCESSIONS WHEN GENERAL THRUST OF GOG'S FOREIGN POLICY,
OUTWARDLY AT LEAST, TENDED IN INCREASINGLY NON-ALIGNED
DIRECTION. PENG FLEEFULLY QUOTED SOVIET DIPLOMAT WHO
ALLEGEDLY TOLD THIRD-COUNTRY COLLEAGUE RECENTLY, "GUINEA
HAS ESCAPED US". IT WAS "GOOD THING" THAT GOG HAD BANNED
SOVIET TU-95 FLIGHTS THROUGH CONAKRY, PENG VOLUNTEERED. GOG
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN COMMERCE OFFICIAL, MEMBER OF
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RECENT GOG DELEGATION TO MOSCOW, HAD TOLD PENG SOVIETS NOW
PAY $15.50/TON FOR GUINEAN BAUXITE, UP FROM PREVIOUS
$13.50.

5. PENG THOUGHT THERE WAS VERY LITTLE CHANCE THAT SOVIETS/
CUBANS WOULD LEAVE ETHIOPIA ONCE FIGHTING STOPPED IN HORN:
"SOVIETS RESPECT ONLY FORCE, NOT MORALITY OR POLITICAL
ARGUMENT". SOVIETS WILL TRY TO REGAIN THEIR POSITION
IN SOMALIA AS WELL, PENG THOUGHT, AND THERE WAS FAIR POS-
SIBILITY SOMALIA'S SIAD BARRE COULD FALL, BUT MUCH DEPENDED
ON EXTENT US WOULD NOW MOVE TO SUPPORT SOMALIA. FOR
ITSELF, PRC WAS FAR AWAY FROM HORN, TOO WEAK (I.E., LACKING
FLEET, WEAPONS) TO SEND BARRE HELP. PRC WOULD CONTINUE
TO OPPOSE SOVIET HEGEMONISM BUT NEEDED TO HUSBAND ITS
RESOURCES TO DEFEND ITSELF AT HOME.

6. PENG HAD "NO IDEA" WHY SOVIETS WERE PUMPING ARMS INTO
MALI AT GREAT RATE AND WAS A PERPLEXED AS EVERYBODY
ELSE AS TO WHY MALI NEEDS SUCH ARMS.

7. PENG DISCLAIMED ANY KNOWLEDGE ABOUT RHODESIAN PROBLEM
OR RELATIONS BETWEEN FACTIONS WITHIN PATRIOTIC FRONT AND

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

BEGGED OFF FROM DISCUSSION, EXCEPT TO SAY THAT PRC SAW
CURRENT INTERNAL SETTLEMENT WITH SMITH AS "SWINDLE"
AND "MYSTIFICATION".

8. PERSONALLY, PENG WAS RELAXED, AMIABLE AND ASSURED.
HE SEEMED INTERESTED IN FACTUAL EXCHANGE -- PARTICULARLY
ON BAUXITE PRICES, FOREIGN FOOD AID TO GUINEA, AND SOVIET
MILITARY FOOTHOLD IN GUINEA -- AND LEFT LITURGICAL HARANGUE
AGAINST SOVIETS AT EVENING'S END TO DCM JEN, TO WHOM
PENG OCCASIONALLY TURNED ON CERTAIN ECONOMIC AND MILITARY
QUESTIONS. MAINLAND UNQUOTE VANCE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MILITARY ASSISTANCE, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 28 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE079071
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: AF/W:DALTON V KILLION
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X1
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780134-0130
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780318/aaaaaoqd.tel
Line Count: 126
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 8f3bfebb-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 27 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3180972
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: DINNER WITH CHINESE AMBASSADOR
TAGS: PEPR, MILI, PINT, US, CH, UR, GV, ML, SO
To: BAMAKO
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/8f3bfebb-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
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